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~*~*~ IDYLS OF FREEDOM ~*~*~



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IDYLS OF FREEDOM

BY

AELLA GREENE

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"JOHN PETERS," "GATHERED FROM LIFE," ETC.

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IDYLS OF FREEDOM

I.

IDYLS OF FREEDOM.

O STARS, what history
It has been yours to see
Enacted here since man,
Crown of creation's plan,
His wanderings began—
Since to his pristine joy
He added an alloy
That forth a rover sent
Him, fired with discontent.
Say since, with Eden lost,
The fateful bounds he crossed,
How dear his straying cost !
Still, while in wretched plight,
He was not hopeless quite,
Nor rayless was his night.

Stars that have kindly shone
On paths his feet have gone—
Than downward, let us hope,
Onward more, and up—

Aid still his wish and quest
For truth, and peace and rest.
Still from the blue above
Shine where he wars to prove
His patriotic love,
And, dying, asks you tell
The ages that he fell
To foil the tyrant's hand
And bless his native land.
And tell, as tell ye must,
O stars, for stars are just,
From what great sacrifice
All others do arise.
Tell what, foreseen, inspired,
And what accomplished, fired,
The patriot heart to live
For liberty and give
His life to make men free.
And aid them that they see
That highest liberty
Gives equal weight of care,
Gives unto each his share
Of burdens all must bear—

That liberty, if boon,
Used wrongly, cometh soon
To license, that is not
True liberty, but blot
On the historic page,
A hindrance to the age.

This life, this sacrifice,
O stars, from which arise
The heavenly blessings given
And hope of more in heav'n—
This life of hope for man,
Ye saw as it began.
Ye saw its teeming day,
O stars, and sunset ray,
And deathly chill of night,
And hint at last of light.
Ye saw the glorious morn
Of grace and peace adorn
The mountain heights of time
And shine to every clime,
To make all life sublime !

A star 'twas guided them
Who fared to Bethlehem ;
And at cerulean poise
It sentineled their joys,
As o'er the Saviour born,
Rejoicing till the morn,
They mused on what should be
His wondrous history.
Stars gave the warning dream
Of Herod's hellish scheme
And guided, then, the flight
To Egypt through the night.
And o'er the child returned
The stars in gladness burned.

The stars rejoiced the boy
And study gave and joy,
As through the years he grew
To all the ages knew—
Till wondering sages gazed
Adoring and amazed.

Stars cheered the Christ who prayed
In lonely mountain glade
And sang their joy to see
The helpful ministry
Of Him of Galilee.
And when His followers slept
Ye stars in pity wept,
And, weeping, wondered ye
At the sublimity
Of sad Gethsemane.
And when at Calvary
The sun refused to shine
Your stellar beams were sign
That Christ the slain should rise,
Completed sacrifice,
Triumphant to the skies !

Ye stars that wondering saw
His answer to the law
Who for the sinful died
And poured the precious tide
Of His great life, to give

The sinful chance to live,—
Ye stars who heard the word
Sublimest ever heard
That Jesus at His death
Spoke with His dying breath,
To say the work was done,
The victory was won—
From that sublimity,
That matchless agony,
All greatness doth proceed.
Thence every noble deed,
Thence all unselfishness,
Thence every pulse to bless
That helps the patriot die,
Without the question why,
For home and liberty.

AMERICA.

ON days and deeds sublime
That gem this western clime,
O stars of Freedom, shine,
And shed your beams benign
Where Concord bridge was won,
And rustic Lexington —
And Bunker Hill declared,
And Bennington, how fared
The foes of liberty
Who warred against the free.

Shine where the great and good
With high solicitude,
In meekness knelt to pray
To Heaven to drive away
The foreign foes and give
The country chance to live.
How humble and how great,
How fit to found a state,

Was he who knelt that day,
At Valley Forge, to pray.
And may his land remain
The place of all good gain
And Freedom's own domain,
The home and resting place
Of bravery and of grace,
Of greatness and all worth—
The paradise of earth !

Though truth the charm will break,
Still best the truth to speak.
Here, where 'twas general boast
That this was Freedom's coast,
Were human beings chained,
While selfishness explained
That slavery was right.
And those who saw the plight
That Liberty was in
By league with such a sin
And dared rebuke the wrong,
That still was growing strong

While grew the nation weak
To danger that 'twould break,
Were stigmatized as fools
Beyond discretion's rules.
But in these later days
The scoffers dare the praise
That radicals were wise
And fit to canonize
For the sublimest skies !

How cursed this sin the land
We came to understand
When Donelson was need
And Fredericksburg, and greed
Of rough-hewn havoc made
On Sherman's master raid
Of horse and infantry
From inland to the sea !
And need to prove our liege
To liberty was siege
Of Vicksburg and the shock
Of "Chickamauga's Rock,"

Grim Thomas of the build
To name for Caesar's guild.
So Grierson's reckless dash,
Discreet in that 'twas rash ;
And Farragut in the shrouds
And Hooker in the clouds,
And Ellsworth first to die,
And gallant Lyon—why
So early sent to heaven !
And why McPherson given
And thousands, thousands more !
How runneth up the score,
Through scenes of din and gore,
To Gettysburg, sublime
Through all the years of time !

What tongue can tell, what pen,
The fate of prisoned men
Who, doomed to the mill
Of Andersonville,
Learned the tortures that spell
A new name for hell !

And who can count their tears
And warring hopes and fears,
Who mourned their loved ones there,
Or slain in conflict, where,
Though glorious thus to fall
For country and for all
That's dear, and true, and high,
'Tis fearful, still to die !
And hard was it to know
That, with the slaughter, slow
Moved the cause of right
And darkened down the night
Of doubt, with scarce a ray
To hint of coming day.
But rose a lustrous star
When he led on the war
Whose calm, courageous way
Of hero in affray,
Assured, at once, a morn
And was the sign to warn
The foemen of defeat
Their cause was sure to meet.

Now once and three times three,
At Appomattox tree,
Give everyone to all
Who heeded Freedom's call
And marched with Grant, to hew
The hard-fought journey through
The Wilderness, to see
The dawn of victory.

But who shall sing to tell
Their deeds who fought and fell
In all the hard campaigns,
Who equal epic strains
For those whose crimson stains
Full thrice a hundred plains
And reddens bloody years,
Which make them high compeers
Of all the brave that time
Hath given to wreath and rhyme !

Let gratitude be given
In joyful song to Heaven ;

Aye, shout and sing again,
Good citizens, that when
The nation was in dole
A man of prophet soul
Was sent to meet our need.
A man inspired to read
The meaning of the times
The country for its crimes
Was going through,—a man
With genius fit to plan
And brave enough to act,
He made his vision fact,
Wielding the nation's might
For mercy and the right,
And breaking, at a stroke,
The bondman's galling yoke.

Good stars, your radiance shed
On paths where Lincoln led
Through all those years of strife
Up to the higher life
Of Freedom and of peace

And all the good increase
That makes these states combined
The envy of mankind !

IN OTHER LANDS.

GOOD stars, what prophet ken
Had Aztec Juarez when,
For liberty he fought
Against the foe who sought
To bind with Spanish chain
The Mexican in train
Of papal Rome, to slave
Subservient where the brave
Descendants of the sun
Their long career had run,
Free as the airs that fanned
Their lovely native land.
Well ye rejoiced to see,
Where foreign tyranny
Had reigned, superior rise,

To crown the high emprise
Of Juarez with success
And so mankind to bless,
The fair republic bright
With promise for the right
Of patriots everywhere.
For each hath right to share
Each country of the free,
Wherever dwelleth he.

Still Juarez only did
As high examples bid—
Through thirty years of blood,
When that brave Swede withstood
The papal powers combined,
Who sought on all mankind
To place the Latin yoke—
Gustavus brave, who broke
The bondage long and sore
For northmen evermore.
He drove the power of Rome
From church, and court, and home,

Wherein the people sing,
To crown Gustavus king !
And cadence of the song
The southland doth prolong,
Where well Emanuel strove
And Garibaldi's love
Was given for Italy,
Mankind and liberty.

And Magyars, whose Kossuth
For country and for truth
Was sacrifice, may raise
To favoring Heaven their praise
For his grand life, and twine
The wreath and pray the Nine
To sing to full import
That high in Austrian court
The Magyars reign, whom erst
The tyrant Austrians cursed !

How bright the stars that look
On Scotland's famous brook

And bid the ages learn
That Bruce of Bannockburn
Was Caledonia's pride !
Shine where her sons defied,
At Flodden field, the foe
That laid her banner low,
Yet in defeat were strong
To height of grandest song.
Beam kind on every glen
Known to his foot and ken,
That kingliest of men,
The Wallace of the Eld,
Whom, then, ye stars beheld
And sang him worthy praise
Of all the future days.

Shine, stars, with beams benign
On scene of deeds divine,
Where Winkelried the brave,
His Switzerland to save,
Threw on the Austrian steel
His mighty rage of zeal

And struck in death the blow
To break the serried foe.
His followers raining blows
Where grand his courage rose,
Thus turned the tide and day
Against the cruel fray
Of those who sought t' enslave
The Switzer patriots brave,
Whom God's own mountains gave
That love of liberty
That fits men to be free.

And evermore shall ye,
Bright stars of liberty,
Rejoice to shine upon
The field where Cromwell won,
At Marston Moor, the day
And stemmed the tyrant's sway,
Till full at Naseby, then,
Where royal Charles again
Marshaled his hosts, the band
Of patriots dared withstand

The legions of the king.
And all the years shall sing,
To let the future know
They routed him to show
That foreign he and foe,
Though native born, if he
Love not true liberty.

TRUTH MAKES FREE.

AS truth alone makes free,
Who country loves must see
The truth and love the truth
As ardently as youth
The maiden from whose heart
Not even death can part.
Truth-founded love gives rate,
The citizen's estate,
A country and a place,
Fraternity and race.
Alien to truth, a man

Nor country hath, nor clan,
Though castled well and crowned
With choicest treasures found
In late or olden times
Through west or Orient climes.
Aye, foreign he, and poor,
And sick, though mount and moor
Afford their gold for wealth
And myrrhs to bless his health.
Not loving truth, then he
Shall poor and homeless be,
Though heraldry declare
That ancient lineage rare
Makes him the rightful heir
To every land and throne,
And though the people own
The purple of his power,
Rejoicing in his dower
And seeking bards to sing
Him bishop, lord and king.
But harps must not descend,
For song hath upward trend ;
So who but hymns for pay

Sings but a meagre lay.
And rhyme they e'er so well,
The bards who seek to tell
An untruth in a song
And sing success of wrong,
Some Cræsus toast for wealth
That came alone by stealth,
And hymn the tyrant's power
As given by heavenly dower,
And cunning as divine
Whose skill hath ends malign,
Will find, though flamed to blaze
That gleams of gala days,
They fail to reach the lays
That live in honor's praise.
Then, faltering down to phrase
Whose labored lines confess
They sing from selfishness,
They'll rave to furious stress
Of prayer to Power to bless,
When Truth alone gives theme
Befitting poet's dream.

This truth, ye stars above,
That all the ages prove—
The true alone can love
Their country or a mate.
No love, Hymen a fate,
Fit messenger of hate !
This truth, bright stars above,
No truth, there is no love.
No truth, the gold shall rust,
To teach the truth it must—
No truth, then love is lust,
And love of country, show
Which all true patriots know
As subterfuge and sham
That would to meanness damn,
Beyond redeeming grace,
A country and a race.

Yet strange contrasts arise,
Some royal mysteries—
A king to virtue known,
Yet who could make his throne

By tricks that must belong
The hellish arts among,
The anchor of a wrong,
That should have scourge of song,
The very rage of rhyme,
To blast to future time !

The Charles whom Cromwell fought,
True in his home, was naught
But false to native land.
Though promising, his hand
Withheld the needed good
He pledged to those who stood
For liberty and right.
For these did Cromwell fight ;
For these he overthrew
The Stuart king and slew
The false one of the throne.
And by the act was shown,
In England evermore—
A truth the wide world o'er,
And as the sunlight plain—

The right of kings to reign,
Original in heaven,
Is to the governed given,
By them to be transferred
In their installing word
To those their love shall say
The kingly traits display.

Would Cromwell had remained,
Preventing crime that stained
Bright Albion's sovran name,
By other Charles who came,
The Charles who ever wrought
Injustice and who thought
Of self alone and sought
Delight in splendid sin
And seemed possessed to win,
By elegance of shame,
An ever florid fame
Unto his royal name !

IDYLS OF FREEDOM

II.

ARRAIGNMENT OF RUSSIA.

I F ill the theme befits
 To sing of Austerlitz ;
If vain to weep awhile
By lone Helena's isle ;
If cold, to some, such theme
For patriotic dream,
In that the Corsican
Fought not for fellow man,
But strove alone for fame
For his imperial name—
O would some one as rod
Of an avenging God
Arise, who, sent by wrath
Of Heaven, should cleave a path
Through Tyranny's domains
To far Siberia's plains,
And break the prison bars
Of victims of the czars !

Sarmatia blotted out
By Russian robber rout !
Her patriots under ban
At whim of Tartar clan !
'Twere just and holy cause
To give the robbers pause
And wrest from their hard hand
That fair despoiled land.
Though bearing Tartar brand
Of master on his slave
Which Russian monster gave,
She shows distinctly, still,
Despite his iron will,
The rare sweet quality
Of fitness to be free.

The cause demands a man
Serener, grander than
The dreaded Corsican ?
May one with like strong hand
And genius to command
Arise, some leader born

Under the star of morn,
Some one whose shining worth
Shall win the best of earth
To highest hope and prayer
For Heaven's especial care,
And win good gallant men
To join his flag, whose ken
At once, from far, can see
The day of victory—
The men with might to win
The boon their faith hath seen.

O chieftain of the skies
And Freedom's cause, arise !
And panoplied for wars,
Go guided by the stars
That favoring shone
Above Napoleon,
In that sublime advance
From his admiring France
That made the Russias quake
And all the kingdoms shake.

Stars they to aid to see
The way to victory,
Stars that would lustrous burn
To light the grand return
Of victors from the fray
Where justice won the day.

Not so the march when Ney
Fared on the frozen way,
To cheer his leader back
Along the winter track
With remnant of his host,
To mourn the prize they lost,
A city burned to ban
The coming Corsican.
Him Russia dared not fight,
But put to sorry plight
By burning roof and bread
That should have housed and fed
The host, who froze or starved
By thousands ere they carved,
With Bonaparte and Ney,
To France their pilgrim way.

But those of right engaged
In righteous warring, waged
To break the dungeon bars
Of prisoned worth, ye stars
Would good birds send to feed
Unto their fullest need
With manna of the heaven
That bread hath ever given
To those who well have striven
Through hard or favored fight
In furtherance of right.

If Moscow burned again
'Twould light the prisoned men
From durance hard to flee
To hope and liberty,
The men whose dungeon bars
Are legacy of czars,
Kings whose oppression is
Acme of tyrannies !
Sending those away
In bondage sore to stay

Whose glances have told,
Or a breath over bold,
That the fancies they hold
Slight hindrances are
To the wish of a czar !
Dooming to banishment
For the mildest intent
Of the patriot heart !
O tyrant, what art
Of the demons is thine !
What spirit malign
That breathes from the hell
Where the worst furies dwell !
Strange that the czar should ban
Those whom but easy plan
Of right would lead to own
Allegiance to his throne
And give their life to prove
Their loyalty of love
And interest in the fame
Of Alexander's name.

Instead, while nations weep,
These Tartar tyrants keep
The victims of their hate
In worse than hellish fate,
Chained down in prison long,
Guarded by legions strong,
While lordly laugh at cries
That move the pitying skies
Rings through the palaces
Rank with festivities,
Where hireling wit doth sneer
And trembling peasants fear.

Read not the story through,
Read not of Finn and Jew.
Read but the lines that tell
How fiercely fought and well
The Polish brave who fell
When Kosciusco gave
Herculean blows to save
Their country from the grave
The Tartar tyrant's might
Had dug for truth and right !

Yet failed Sarmatia, then ;
And her heroic men,
Whose patriotic worth
Had brightened all the earth,
Were doomed to martyr's pains
Or, graced with heavy chains,
Were named a felon band
And sent to foreign strand.
There they were given brand
To speak a meaner rate
Than marked the murderer's fate,
Whose hands the blood had spilt
Of parricidal guilt.

Read not the story through,
One page alone will do !
One page alone of dread,
One page with terror red,
One page of hot tears shed,
One page of that despair,
Which fades the eye and hair,
Saps e'en the power to cry,
Gives a hot thirst to die,

Kills the smile on the face,
Blots the last look of grace,
Blots the last mental trace,
Stills the hand from device,
Chills the blood into ice,
And the nerves into bone,
And the heart into stone !

O what chieftain would dare
In the lists with despair !
O dead and worse than dead
The heart whence hope has fled !
And yet, though dead, how quick
That heart at the tick
Of the seconds of time
And the pulsing of rhyme
Of the song that keeps tune
With the cadence of June !
Despairing and dead,
Yet trembling with dread
At the tenderest song
That is wafted along

By the zephyrs of morn
Over clover and corn,
Or when silver stars stream
That so floats with their gleam
That silence is heard
O'er the clearest sweet word
That friendship can give
To wake one to live !
There's never a heart
That's alive to all art
And is beating in chime
With nature's sweet rhyme,
But if conquered by fear
Would shudder to hear
Even music of waves
Of the streamlet that laves
The myrtle banks sweet
Where the fairy ones meet,
In elfin land grove,
To warble of love.
Aye, held by despair,
No victim could bear
Breath from elfin land, where

But a breath of the air
Of the earth would displace
The planets that trace
Round the elfin land sun
The courses they run.

What then is the fate
Of the victims of hate
Of the despot who reigns
O'er the Russian domains
And his victims doth cast
To the Borean blast
Of the bleak northern plains,
Or doometh to chains
Of Saghalin, or wills
That in Caucasus hills
They shall dig till they die,
And dishonored shall lie
In a far away grave
Too mean for a slave !

Despair that anywhere
Is worst of woes that are,

How thrice 'tis very hell
In a Siberian cell,
Or in Siberian mines
Where hope never shines,
Where song is never heard,
Where friendship's kind word
Would seem but a dream,
But a swamp-like gleam—
A phosphorus ray,
To hint of a day
That never could come
To a castaway's gloom !

Yet, patriots, sad till song
Doth tantalize, ere long
The skies shall make you strong
Unto successful war
Against the despot czar.
And fates shall seize his scourge
And time for him a dirge
Of punishment as sore
As that he had in store

For patriotic hearts
That long had known his arts.

O Heaven, whose lurid star
Maddens to might and war !
When thou shalt undertake
The Russian yoke to break,
Say, Heaven of justice, say,
What blood can ever pay
The wrong to Poland done
By those whose ravage won
By Vistula's fair tide,
That, often crimson-dyed
From noblest patriot slain,
Goes moaning to the main !

Ye thrice ten thousand dead,
Whose blood the Cossacks shed
In homes of Praga fair,
How eloquent your prayer
Throughout the saddened years
Of agony and tears—

A plea to Heaven to aid
A land in ruin laid,
A plea repeated o'er
With emphasis of gore
Of many thousands more
Where Warsaw's reddened plains,
That Freedom's ichor stains,
And Cracow's crimsoned sod
Still wail their plaints to God !
Fair Wanda's mountain moans
Responsive to the groans
And Dnieper makes her cry,
For Dniester to reply.
And from the Don to San,
Rebuking Russian ban,
Blood red the waters gleam
Of each Sarmatian stream !
Whichever way it track,
To Baltic or the Black,
Sad, sad each river flows,
A requiem of woes,
From Poland to the seas
That chant her miseries !

O ye who died to give
To Poland right to live—
A century of grief,
With none to give relief !
And worthy sons of sires
Of Poland bound ! O fires
Of hell, what flame can pay
And burn the guilt away
That clothes the Russian name
With everlasting shame !

Stay, Angel of the Book
Of Record, stay, and look !
For this is far from all
That flames of that fierce thrall
Upon the single page
That tells the Russian rage
To Poland done, whose whole
Of tyrant dirt and dole
Hath hue of Herod's crime,
And smells of Nero's time !
Fair women sent to pine

And delve in noisome mine
Where gladness cannot shine,
Or sent with felon's chain
To walk the weary plain
Where mercy hath no rate,
Where hunger hath no sate
But cup and crust of hate !
Or hath she darker fate,
That is so worse than death
It is not given breath !

Nor is this all; for there,
Condemned to felon's fare,
Do patriot children know
Maturity of woe !
O God ! where is the hell
In which damned spirits dwell
That is enough for this !
For blotting out the bliss
From childhood's heart of joy
That never knew alloy
Of ill, nor thought to stray
In sin's forbidden way !

To keep the code of heaven,
The patriots have forgiven,
In hopes that kindness win
Who seventy times should sin.
Yet seven times that have striven
These foes of man and Heaven,
And by ten thousand times
Have multiplied their crimes—
With shrewdest cunning wrought,
With mighty armies fought,
To quench the patriot fires
That God himself inspires
In hearts that turn, O stars,
To you, through prison bars,
And wail to Heaven the cries
Of Poland's agonies !

Endured, the Tartars laugh
And like the Chaldean quaff,
At high imperial feast
To their full wishes drest,
The nectar of their pride
That long hath Heaven defied—

Potations proudly poured
To mock the names adored
By Poland and by man
For leading Freedom's van !
Wine drunk in Tartar hate,
From vessels desecrate
That came from temples where,
In their devotion rare,
The loving and the free
Their feasts of liberty
In Polish custom held,
Far back in days of Eld !

But Heaven impatient grows,
And, noting long the woes
Of Poland and of all
Within the Tartar's thrall,
Will surely send a hand
To write where Russian band,
In revel o'er their wine,
Shall read and know the sign
Grim glistening on the wall,
That tyranny must fall !

Aye, patience may endure,
But wrath deferred is sure.
And soon some one shall rise
To hear and heed the cries
Of victims of the czars !
And then, O waiting stars,
How will ye shout and sing
And call the birds to wing
In swiftest flight, to tell
Wherever patriots dwell,
Who 'twas in frozen hell
Of far Siberian plains
Broke off the bars and chains
Of victims of the czars,
And, witnessed by the stars,
Declared the patriots free
And worthy liberty,
And Poland's flag unfurled
To honor in the world !

VISION AND PROPHECY.

ON Ural hills it came,
A tongue of prophet flame,
A burning thither sent
From out the firmament
Of justice, love and truth,
And everlasting youth.
And thus the fervid voice:
“O tyrant, have thy choice,
To turn to righteousness
And teach thy hands to bless—
Repent the despot's crime,
Worst tyranny of time,
Or take the doom that falls
Thereon—the mighty walls
That Power uprears thrown down,
The dimmed and wrested crown
Of monarchs in defeat,
With conscience to repeat
To all the winds that fleet—
‘The tyrant's fate is meet!’”

Thus while the bright night heard
Swift flew the warning word
And sought by westward star
The palace of the czar.
There, round their festive board,
His nobles and their lord
Glowed o'er their ruddy wine,
In toast of new design
To make the exiles weep
And keep the world asleep
Anent the wrongs that steep
The tyrant Tartar's name
In infamy and shame.

But stay, why trembles he ?
What vision doth he see ?
No ghost in festive hall ;
No hand upon the wall,
To make his pleasures pall.
No fiend his eyes detect ;
No peasant to suspect.
Tried ministers attend,
Full foot and horse defend

The throne and citadel
Where czar and kindred dwell,
And cordoned round the land
Grim guarding legions stand !
Yet pales the czar with dread !
He deems assassins tread,
With blade athirst and blast,
To drink his blood, and cast
In atoms to the sky
The halls of tyranny !

The voice from Ural hills
Flamed forth hath gone in thrills
Of swiftest breezes blown
Along the northern zone,
And many leagues afar
In palace of the czar
With trembling terror fills,
To consternation chills
The ruler of the land.
And not invention planned
To keep supreme at home
His reign, if foes should come,—

And not ambitious schemes
That give him pleasant dreams
Of other lands to gain,
Of widening domain
To great increase of dower,
To boundlessness of power —
Not one of these, nor all,
Can break the chilling thrall,
And drive the fiends away
That on his spirit prey !

And evermore shall cling
Those fiends, and tear and sting,
And for new vigor drink
The ichor, black as ink,
Of veins of tyranny
That fed on liberty
Through many, many years,
Drank river floods of tears
And jeered a thousand sneers
At patriotic sighs
Drawn by a czar's emprise !

After the burning spoke
And round the echoes woke
Responsive to the doom
The flame announced to come,—
Soft blazed the voice of truth,
In tones of tender ruth
Of love's sweet firmament,
A message eastward sent
By one appearing there
From out the upper air,
Who seemed to high emprise
Commissioned by the skies.
He wore that loveliness
That doth high worth express
In angel or in men
Of angel mien and ken.

Away on zephyrs borne,
He came at tinge of morn
To bleak Siberian strand,
The northern demonland.
There imps abound in air
Who give their constant care

That when the tyrants die
Some sprite of ill shall fly
To convoy them to hell,
Reporting there how well
They have performed the work
The monarch of the murk
Assigns, and thus how far
They have obeyed the czar.

From spirit of the sky
The imps affrighted fly.
And well escaped his might,
They pause them in their flight
And hiss in powerless ire
Their breath of spiteful fire,
That freezes on the air.
And now they backward fare,
To see if stranger sprite
Shall think him to alight.
And soon he turns to fly,
That bright one of the sky,
His plumage to begrime,
Down through the jagged rime

Of rock where guardsmen pace
To keep the exile race.
Deep where they delve in mines
And sunshine never shines,
He comes to drive the gloom
That overhangs this tomb
Of Russian liberty,
This Bastile of the free !
And this the word of cheer
The toilers, listening, hear:
"Good patience, still, ye braves
Condemned to fate of slaves !
Against Oppression's throne,
The Mighty makes His own
The cause of those who, long
In suffering, still are strong."

Glad on his herald tongue
The delvers hopeful hung.
Yet scarce could angel's cheer
Dispel an exile's fear.

Forth then the voice of flame.
And soon a lovelier came,
An angel with this word:
"The message ye have heard
Was told to me in heaven
Whence all good gifts are given.
So strange 'twas thought 'twould seem,
So fanciful the dream,
Another one was sent
Attesting the intent
Of powers above to bless
With buoyance in duress
And exodus from chains
To Freedom's fair domains."

The angel ceased and drew
A stylus forth of hue
Of the cerulean blue
And ruby stone and white,
And straight began to write
Upon the prison mine
With deep cut lustrous sign.

No words the delving said,
But breathless watched and read,
And forth the angel fled.

Came then a third, to say,
"Toilers, ye have seen to-day
Two of the seven prized most
Of the selectest host
Of all the armies bright
Bannered in realms of light.
Aflame with brightest star,
That host ten thousand are,
With place of honor given
The thousand best of heaven,
They who the most have blessed,
As heaven's accounts attest,
The sorrowing ones of earth,
And honored most true worth.
And those a hundred best
Have placed before the rest,
The hundred giving seven
Most pleasing unto Heaven

The highest, foremost place
Of all the angel race.

“And of this number, one
Is Uriel of the sun;
And Raphael gracious is
And given to ministries,
And most sublimities
Hath missioned been to see,
And most of misery.
The first your boon to tell
Was flaming Uriel,
And Raphael who came
To witness Uriel's flame
And cheer with face benign
The delvers in this mine.

“Led Israfil the throng
In that first Christmas song
That told the waiting earth
Of a Redeemer's birth.
And he and all the seven
From out the weeping heaven

Flown sad, in sympathy
And wondering tears, to see
The dread sublimity
Of rugged Calvary,
Stayed sentinels and kept
The tomb where Jesus slept—
The loveliest of the sky,
Who gave Himself to die.
And their rejoicing eyes
Beheld the Saviour rise
And saw the earliest ray
That tinged an Easter day.

“Not oft do mortals see
In quick succession three
Celestial ones, as ye
This day have seen and heard
In glad prophetic word.
Yet men this truth may know,
That for each want and woe
Some angel waits above
Commissioned by the Love
Supreme, to fly and prove

With blessings from the skies
That He is kind and wise
And doth permit the stress,
To give Him chance to bless
And those who suffer, place
To struggle into grace
Of goodness and the dower
Of perfectness of power.
Whoso behaveth right
Whatever be his plight ,
Whoever thinketh bright,
Important, happy thing
To say, or paint, or sing,
Hath influence from the sky,
And voice to ask him try
Unto the highest, best
One may and should, thus blessed,
To make both fine and strong
The word, the tint, the song.
Who heedeth first, hath more
Of the celestial store
That gives uplift from trite
To new, from slough to height,

From weakness unto might,
From dryness, deadness, blight,
To bud and leaf and bloom
That hint of Junes to come.
O gracious boundlessness
Of Heaven's power to bless !

“Keep sweet, O patriots, ye
In this hard slavery.
And some day ye shall see
The tyrant bend the knee
To ask for leave to fly,
By conscience scourged, to die
Beneath this bitter sky !
Here, where the clank of chains
Doth fright Siberian plains
To barrenness and dearth
Unknown elsewhere on earth—
Here, where such blight has blown
Forever from the zone
Of doubt, that all the air
Is dense with chill despair !”

Seen or invisible,
As seemeth to them well,
The spirits come to tell
The words of wrath or love
That emanate above.
And though alert to sounds
And sights that vex their rounds,
The guardsmen of the mines,
Sworn to the czar's designs,
Saw not those whose emprise
Was threatening from the skies,
Though came they bright as stars
To speak the doom of czars.
But read the guards in mine
The deeply-written sign,
And sent a message far
To citadel of czar.
And he to frenzy flew
And worse each moment grew.
Imperial mandate given,
The royal guards had striven
The writing to erase.
But none could yet efface

Indictment graven there
By one of upper air.
And livid in that mine
Fierce glistened still each line :

*“ For Poland’s cup of gall
The Russian throne must fall,
Unless the czars repent
Before the firmament
And prove sincere intent
To eying stars, that see
What is sincerity
And will no fleeting mood
Of tears for years of blood.
They ask contrition due
And that, to honor true,
The tyrants right the wrong
Their hate hath done so long,
And do the people’s choice,
And make their hearts rejoice,
And make the throne their voice ! ”*

The czar a chemist sent,
Who with fierce caustics went,

To eat the message out
That so had put to rout
The pleasure of the czar,
And toiled from dawn to star
With fiery rust and bar.

Homeward a horseman flew,
And this the message true :
“No science can begin,
Nor skill, the race to win—
The words are burning in !”
Some straying peasant heard
The courier's fateful word
Reported to the lord
Chief courtier of the king.
And all the people sing,
And children join the din,
“*The words are burning in !*”

Again the man with bar
And blast to please the czar,
And tear the message out,
Of which the people shout.

And with his mission o'er,
Reports he as before :
“ A span, a foot, a rod—
Swift science doth but plod.
The words do inward fly
As missioned from the sky ! ”

In rage the monarch flew,
The alchemist he slew,
And sent another still,
With threat to chain and kill
Did he not burn or tear
That message of despair.
And with him fared a guard
That no one should retard,
Nor scientist should flee
If unsuccessful he.
Returned, he trembling said,
As forth the guardsmen led
Him, strongly held and bound,
To slay if faithless found :
“ A foot, an ell, a rod—
The message writ of God

About a nation's sin
Is further burning in ! ”

The guardsmen aim to fire !
The monarch cries, “ Retire
With him in heavy chains
To wildest northern plains !
The recreant's mocking breath
Must not the ease of death ! ”

Fruitless the despot's plan
Of banishing the man.
Borne by the ready airs,
That message onward fares
Through scenes of joy and dearth
Around the peopled earth !
Hills tell it unto fen,
The wilds to homes of men,
The mountain to the moor,
The robin at the door
Of cottage and of hall—
That broken soon the thrall
Of Russian slaves will be,

And joy of Liberty !
And chant the brooks and birds,
“The angel-written words
About a nation’s sin
Are ever burning in !”

And other birds are singing
In every morn of winging,
In every noon of flying
For food for birdlings crying,
And eve of homeward hieing
To nest, and rest, and love,
A message from above
Befitting lark or dove
To sing in all the earth ;
“Man’s greatest wealth, his worth,
His unearned plenty, dearth ;
His best of liberty,
Deserving to be free.”

Still other birds that fly
And sing, they know not why,
Thus cheer, inspire and warn

At eve and happy morn :
“ Whatever first success,
What flatterers address,
How fondly love caress,
How praiseth selfishness
That hopes returns to bless,
Whatever is the stress
Of noyance that doth press,
War waged for wrong is wrong,
And weak and never strong.
And weak is war for might ;
But ever finds true knight
All powerful war for right;
For God is in the fight !
Though right should lose the fray,
And victory delay,
Yet surely comes the day
Of victory to stay,
And show that right hath might,
For God is in the fight ! ”

A WARNING TO COLUMBIA.

BUT briefly where it sung
The sentient glowing hung.
Then over seas it came,
The fearless warning flame,
And o'er Potomac's tide
In indignation cried,
As, eying halls of state,
Mid-air the burning sate,
Self-poised in conscious truth
And sense of lasting youth :
“ For shame, Columbia, shame !
Bedimming thy bright name
By leaguings with the power
That claims by heavenly dower
Each individual soul
Of lands in his control,
With right to dominate,
Unto severest fate
Those bending not the knee
At nod of tyranny !

“ Why dost thou promise, why,
That when to thee shall fly
Those fortunate to break
Their bondage and to take
Across the seas their way,
West guided by the ray
Of freedom, to thy land,
They shall be held for hand
Of czar, whose wrath they flee
To fly in hope to thee?
These sent to despot back,
To dungeon and to rack,
For holding but the thought
That ill the tyrant wrought
In Russian robber rout
That blotted nations out!
In league, Columbia, why,
With Russian tyranny?”

In silence, then, the flame,
To hear if answer came
From out Columbian hall.
And, saying “ Deaf to all

And to thy past untrue,"
The lustre, sighing, flew
To welcome of the blue,
That bent, sad questioning,
And bade the birds to sing,
And brooks.—"Columbia, why
In league with tyranny?"

"O PATRIOTS, PURE AND STRONG."

O PATRIOTS, pure and strong,
And waiting now so long
Surcease of this hard fate,
Wait on, for God doth wait !
For Christ, when in the fate
O'er which all nature wept
And Heaven sad vigils kept,
His slayers could forgive,
And died that they might live.

He shed in death the tears
That permeate the years
And ever plead with man
The beauty of the plan
Of giving bread for blows,
For thorn the thornless rose
Of love that sweeter grows
Through trials oft and sore—
That, wounded o'er and o'er,
Doth from its fragrant store
The balm of good disburse,
And blessing breathe for curse.

God's greatest name is Love;
His carrier bird, the dove.
Yet His the eagle is,
And all the majesties
Of all the life of earth,
Since far creation's birth !
He gave the tiger power,
Leviathan his dower,
To lash the seas to rage
And mighty ships engage.

He taught the earth to quake,
And made the mountains shake.
'Twas He created light
And piled the Alpine height.
He set the rhythmic spheres
To cadence of the years
Of the eternity
He gave the right to be !
His Christ of Olivet
And Galilee used yet
A scourge ; His Moses saw
The lightnings of the law
From Sinai blaze, to tell
That with Jehovah dwell
All powers, and it is well
With those alone who fear
Him, and in truth sincere,
Hold all His statutes dear,
Who live for righteousness,
And never to oppress.
And He, if stubborn prove
The czars to pleas of love,
Will thunder in His wrath

And plow with war a path
Through tyranny's domains
And break the exile's chains,
And lead each patriot band
To home and native land.

Fail not, protesting rhyme
Against the Russian crime,
Fail not his worth to sing,
Who, once in Russia king,
Had righted much of wrong,
Had not the furious throng
Smote Alexander down
And set the Russian crown
Against the Polish cause
Of Liberty's good laws.
But Polish patriots see
A crime in anarchy.
No vengeance on their foes
Would they ; but thornless rose
And white, and every flower
Of Peace for those whose power
Hath been so long the ban

Of Russia and of man !
Unselfish in their grief,
These patriots seek relief
For all who feel
The tyrant's iron heel.
To people of the realm
They seek to give the helm
Of Russian power,
As rightful dower.
Nor charge they the rod
Of tyranny to God.
And spurn they the extremes
Of the ill-visioned dreams
Of those anarchic fools
Whom wild unwisdom rules,
They of that base alloy
Which nerves men to destroy,—
Gives them the greed to kill
And scent for blood to spill.

A PILGRIMAGE OF CZARS.

WILL tyrants turn, who make
Their chief delight to break
The patriotic heart,
And name their crime an art !
Yet grant imagination scope,
And patience chance to hope
That czars be won to sense
Of need of penitence,
Or scourged until they see
How wrong the cruelty
That gives to Poland tears,
And damns a thousand years !

Should miracle be done
The greatest under sun,
The visioned stars have seen,
And czars repentance mean—
Go, czars, by conscience sent,
Go honored to repent,
Go with your burden bent,

Go any way ye must,
Go, if through thorns and dust ;
Go, if with heavy chains
Like exiles o'er the plains !
Go, grateful that you may ;
Go seek fit place to pray,
Go where the zephyrs say
That sigh from heaven's way !
Go, foes of liberty,
And fall on suppliant knee
Where dust of Kracut is
'Mid Cracow's mysteries,
The first of Polish kings
The muse of History sings,
The Slavic chief of time
Ere czars had cursed his clime.
There, pleading not the claim
Of royalty or fame,
But only His good name
Who gave the one relief
That owned himself a thief—
There tell the skies your sin,
Aware as ye begin

That Christ, the ever kind,
With justice mild, consigned
To millstone and the sea
The unwept tyranny
Of Pharisees of old,
To whom ye likeness hold.
Kneel then in Cracow, where
The soul of Wanda fair
Doth frequent still the air
Above the hill that claims
Sweetest of Polish names.
And ask you there of Heaven
If czars can be forgiven !

BY KOSCIUSKO'S DUST.

THEN, with this pleading done,
If beams benignant sun,
Or if for you there shine
A ray of star benign;
Then seek another grave,

His place whom Heaven gave
To show to czars and earth
A Polish patriot's worth,
And sent to aid, in youth,
Columbia's cause of truth.
By Kosciusko's rest
Your prayers addressed
The Heaven of Liberty,
Ye may forgiven be
Of Heaven and of the free.
There hear from far the cry
Of those who hope, or try
To hope, before they die
To see once more the home
From whence dear memories come.
O ! memories that burn
And into torments turn !
And still the patriots yearn
For once to grasp the hand
Of kindred in the land
Of Kosciusko's birth,
The dearest land of earth !

O, cruel tyranny !
That freemen may not see
For once the boyhood farm,
Sweet with the pet brook's charm ;
For once the childhood cot,
For once the play-place grot,
For once the daisied mead,
For once two paths to lead,
As once, to trysting place
Of bravery and of grace !
For once the grassy mound
That love's fair roses crowned !
There Linka's ashes lie,
Who had the choice to die
Or tell the tyrant's spy,
When by His Highness bid,
Of patriot Pavel hid !
And there's the outlook hill,
And there the near-by rill,
And there the other stream,
Whose unforgotten gleam
Inspired the boyhood dream
Of busy, stirring life,

Of joy in hardest strife,
Of earning high success,
Of coming home to bless,
With nobly won largess,
The village where in joy
Erstwhile dwelt the boy !

Instead, condemned to pine
Imprisoned in a mine,
For that high quality
That fits men to be free.

Where Kosciusko lies,
Best of the sanctities
Of the Sarmatian land,
There, tyrants, stand,
There, tyrants, kneel,
And well the honor feel !
There, ye who give a slave
The right to choose his grave,
The felon, who atones,
With hempen halter, groans
He caused, the right to say

Where ye his bones shall lay—
There, by Kosciusko's dust,
Be honest, once, and just !
There talk repentant czars,
With conscience and the stars !
Tell stars and conscience why
In vain do freemen cry
To you for boon of serf,
For one green stretch of turf,
Where, from foreign strand
Sent back to native land—
Where, if not given breath
At home, they may at death
Be sent to final rest,
To slumber unoppressed !

Cannot endure the stars ?
Why, there's a place, ye czars,
Where stars do never shine,
And whence no royal line
Or peasant cometh back
By straight or devious track—
But onward still must fare

Whoever goeth there !
And there's another, too,
Where stars are never due,
But lurid lightnings glare,
And demons rule the air ;
And hither none shall fare
That ever enter there !
And there's another still
Of flowery plain and hill
Of Sion, blest abode
Of angels and of God !
And of the saints who rise
From earth's hard agonies
To freedom of the skies !

There song of streams that flow
Attuned to airs that blow
With spicy odors blessed,
The very rhythm of rest,
To souls that need repose,
And stimulus to those
Who, calmed and strong, aspire
Unto tumultuous lyre.

And theirs a theme to fill
The heavens with joy, until
Enraptured o'er the song,
The very groves prolong
The joy and join to sing,
With birds of every wing.
But, untransformed by grace
To fitness for the place,
In heaven no tyrants live ;
For heavenly blisses give
Such influence that 'twere hell
For tyrants there to dwell.

WARNINGS FROM ELDER DAYS.

THINK not, unthinking czars,
To contradict the stars !
For they have lived to see
Too much of history
To deign to a reply
When even Russians lie !

Boast not your hosts in arms,
That give the world alarms.
For steel-clad giants are
But pigmies to a star.
Stars laugh at all your power
And point to Shinar's tower,
That was, and Babylon
That boasted to the sun
Of her Chaldean might,
And held the world in fright,
And perished in a night !
And but her ruins tell
Of Babylon that fell !

And point the stars, to king
Of whom but furies sing,
The Herod throned of yore,
But cursed forevermore
In street and cloister lore.

From scanning these
Look back to Rameses,
Whom and whose like gave tears

For twice two hundred years
To chosen sons of God.
And these condemned to plod,
Scourged by oppression's rod
That grew by gore,
These through their bondage sore
Upon God's promise fed,
Till, brave enough, they fled,
By visioned shepherd led.

And now the sea before
Withholds from freedom's shore,
And prisoning mountains stand
To hold for Pharaoh's hand !
But look ! the flood divides,
Heaven holds apart the tides !
The fugitives pass through !
Menephtah's hosts pursue ;
But fierce returning waves
Whelm in their watery graves
Ruler, horsemen, all—
A wreck that hints the fall
Of the Egyptian throne,

O'er which in warning moan
The ages sweep, to say
That tyrants pass away !

Man's title to be free
Is writ in history,
And finds, to prove it, given
The very truth of Heaven.
And, sweet as favoring word
By wooing Honor heard,
The song of brook and bird
And Zephyr's minstrelsy
Are music of the free.
So everything decries
The despot's tyrannies.
In waking life of spring,
When glad the robins sing ;
In the persuasive breath
Of June from flowery heath ;
In airs that sweeten shade
Of pleasant wooded glade
And move the fairy ferns
To dance by merry burns ;

In storms around the peaks
Where fierce the thunder speaks ;
In chill November's gale
That sweeps the frosted vale ;
In Ocean's sullen roar
On Winter's icy shore—
In all her ministries,
The voice of nature is
Rebuke of tyrannies.

In tender tones and mild,
As plaintive voice of child,
In clarion peal, and strong
As burst of lyric song;
Commanding, deep and slow
As centuries that flow
Through history
Toward eternity—
The olden warning word
Repeated, now is heard
In all the upward trend
To Consummation's end ;
The word in every wind,

The word in every mind,
But yours, audacious czars,
Who contradict the stars—
“Let ye my people go !
Let ye the exiles go !”







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